

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

Are They Starting To Figure It Out??



By State Representative John J. Ryan

I had the draft for this week's column (on yet another topic where little was actually done this year in the General Assembly Session) two-thirds done when I noticed the editorial in Sunday's daily Stamford newspaper. It began "It seems to say something about

Connecticut lawmakers - the majority Democrats in particular - that they have the time to exhaustively pursue an ethics investigation of an aide to the Republican governor during an election year, while for at least two years they have not had the time to enact legislation against arbitrary use of eminent domain."

This is a stunning development - a local daily has actually figured out which political party is in the majority in the State legislature! And, this has been followed with the logical deduction that the legislative majority should be able to pass legislation. I confess; I was overwhelmed. Then I turned to the facing page and saw a guest editorial from Chris Powell (editor of the upstate Manchester Journal-Inquirer) entitled "What scandal?" where he dismissed the tempest-in-teapot proceedings about the Governor's Chief-of-Staff as "silly" and made the observation that "Rell is the only candidate for major office in the state who is refusing to accept political contributions from lobbyists and state contractors. This practice alone makes the Moody affair trivial."

Powell is acerbic, and probably the most direct of the State's editorialists, but he was in a local paper? Is this a new development? Are our local daily newspapers actually getting the hang of giving their readers some real analysis? With the hope that this actually is a trend, and now that we know that local editorialists now realize which political party has a large legislative majority in Hartford, here are some more thoughts for those daily paper editors to ponder:

- An issue in this gubernatorial election will be the challenges and problems confronting our urban areas; and candidates opposing Governor Rell are criticizing her policies, so let's see now, the mayors of Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, Waterbury, Stamford are all in which party? And the legislators representing all of these cities are overwhelmingly from which party? Might these mayors, and the legislative majority share some responsibility for the success/failure of urban policies?;

- And while we are at it, can we ask exactly the same questions regarding urban transportation issues? And every year, challenger candidates in lower Fairfield County (and Mayors!) from the majority party bemoan the lack of funding that comes back to their communities from Hartford;
- Now who is it again that is in the legislative majority that has huge input into where State dollars go?;
- Exact same question as above on "school funding" issues?;
- Will we see an editorial that analogizes the very recent budgetary disaster in New Jersey with what has occurred over the last 2 decades here in Connecticut? (come on, let's help these folks out now....in New Jersey both houses of the Legislature, as well as the Governor are in the control of the same party? or...True or False: New Jersey has a constitutional spending cap? Is it true that New Jersey was raising the sales tax to cut property taxes?)
- OK, OK, we don't want to make this TOO difficult now, but did the editors notice that this year's surplus number is now exceeding \$910 million dollars? Is there any analysis to be done there, such as, which tax categories, and which particular taxpayers, are "overperforming"?

Are the conclusions from that analysis relevant to a discussion of where program funding goes? And will these editors even remember the surplus data when calls come (from which party?) for the next round of tax increases?

Now if the guys who run the sports pages in these dailies can note the significant financial resources available to the New York Yankees, and hold them to task for not winning the World Series for several years now, can we expect any perception and recognition from other folks at the paper? If the sports writers (and even the radio talk show characters) can trash the management shortcomings of the New York Knicks, are we requiring great feats of analysis to discern why major governmental policies issue are unaddressed in the General Assembly?

Please feel free to contact me with your concerns and issues. As your state representative, it is my job, and my priority to represent you and to make sure that your needs and concerns are addressed at the capitol. You can write to me at Room 4200, Legislative Office Building, Hartford, CT 06106-1591, send me e-mail at John.Ryan@housegop.ct.gov or call my office toll-free at 1-800-842-1423.